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ABSTRACT

The booklet presents an overview of California's GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) program. Following a brief introduction, the booklet presents a rationale and statement of program goals along with a discussion of legislative intent. Standards for quality programing are outlined. A model depicts the three major GATE components: (1) identification categories (such as intellectual, creative, and leadership); (2) program options (including acceleration, independent study, and services to underachieving pupils); and (3) elements (such as differentiated opportunities for learning and alternative learning environments). Financial aspects are addressed, as are criteria for evaluation. The booklet concludes with questions and answers about the GATE program. (CL)

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The GATEWAY

Gifted and Talented Education in California Public Schools

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CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Bill Honig, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Sacramento, 1984

The GATEWAY

Gifted and Talented Education in California Public Schools

Prepared by

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California State Department
of Education**

Gifted and Talented Education

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sections 3800—3870

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1984

A list of publications on gifted and talented education available from the Department may be found on page 18.

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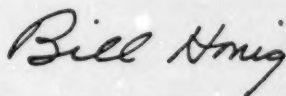
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Foreword

Our thrust for excellence in education begins with the identification and development, to the fullest extent possible, of the intellectual and creative resources on which we all depend. In doing so, we must look carefully at the aspirations and capabilities of each child. And, as a part of this effort, we must do all in our power to help the gifted and talented child reach his or her greatest potential. That is the goal of the statewide program for gifted and talented children (the GATE Program).

I support the GATE Program's efforts to serve our gifted and talented children, who will one day have an influence on our state and nation far beyond their numbers. I am pleased that this program emphasizes such things as the more advanced skills of comprehension and analysis. In so doing, the teachers of the gifted and talented are making use of some of our most powerful educational tools. I am also pleased that the GATE Program calls for the participation of economically disadvantaged children as well as children of different cultural backgrounds. As a result of these efforts, I would expect to find an increased number of our graduates who are equipped to manage and lead our country in the decades ahead. As was pointed out in the last chapter of *Education of Gifted and Talented Pupils*:

By providing for gifted children and youth in the schools, California's citizens, legislators, and educators demonstrate their concern for giving young people the opportunities they need to develop their own capabilities and talents. These opportunities contribute to the fulfillment of individuals as responsible, creative human beings; to the strengthening of our democratic society; and to the improvement of our way of life.



Superintendent of Public Instruction

Gifted and Talented Education (GATE)

Introduction

In the 1983-84 fiscal year, 441 California school districts received additional state funding to meet the educational needs of gifted and talented pupils in kindergarten and grades one through twelve. These districts include, in their programs for the gifted and talented, both underachievers and achievers, the disadvantaged and the advantaged, and pupils representing a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Pupils are screened and identified, on an equal opportunity basis, as being gifted or talented in one or more of six categories: intellectual, creative, academic, leadership, high achievement, and visual and performing arts. Once identified, pupils are considered for placement in a range of program options.

School districts eligible for supplemental state funding for GATE programs are those districts that conducted state-approved mentally gifted minor programs in 1978-79 (*Education Code Section 52204*) or were selected by the State Board of Education as replacement districts (*Education Code Section 52211*). GATE educators in these districts are encouraged to innovate in program design, cost levels, and identification procedures. (Several formulas are used to equalize funding among school districts.) Program expansion in areas of leadership and in the visual and performing arts challenges local program coordinators to formulate valid and reliable means of identifying both demonstrated and potential talent. It is hoped that the evaluation data and recommendations that result will have a positive effect on the status of the statewide GATE program after 1986. (The sunset clause affecting the program is contained in *Education Code Section 52214*.)

Rationale

Gifted and talented education is consistent with basic principles of American education,

which seeks full development of each individual's capabilities. The future of our country depends on the values, patterns of behavior, analytical and problem-solving skills, creativity, and leadership fostered in highly able children and youths. Needs-based and ability-based education of the gifted and talented nourishes an important source of solutions to horrendous economic, social, political, and military problems. In addition, it upholds such basic principles as equal opportunity, self-realization, and freedom.

Goals

Two goals of gifted and talented education are:

- To enable gifted and talented children to become what they can and should become
- To enable the State of California and the United States to become what they can and should become

Related to these generic intents are the goals and tasks of:

1. Documenting the need for and significant results from uniquely appropriate learning experiences
2. Using a number of valid ways by which to identify the gifted and talented
3. Increasing the involvement of underserved groups
4. Helping underachievers achieve at a level commensurate with their abilities
5. Improving the ability of teachers to cultivate in students the higher intellectual, creative, and academic skills as well as leadership, high achievement, and accomplishment in the visual and performing arts
6. Providing needs-based and appropriately differentiated learning opportunities and curricula for children with very high potential or demonstrated abilities
7. Experimenting with new ways of offering programs and with various cost levels
8. Involving parents in planning and evaluating programs

Legislative Intent

The goals of gifted and talented education and the more specific objectives for implementing the goals must comply with legislative intent (*Education Code* Section 52200). That is, GATE programs are expected to:

- Improve the quality of existing programs for gifted and talented pupils.
- Ensure full participation of economically disadvantaged pupils as well as pupils from different cultural backgrounds.
- Encourage experimentation with a variety of programs and cost levels.
- Provide for the identification of gifted and talented pupils by individual school districts in a variety of ways, provided the quality of programs for individual pupils is not diminished (*Education Code* Section 52200).

The Legislature also expects educators to consider six elements when designing programs and implementing program options suitable for developing unique, highly intellectual, creative, academic, leadership, achievement, and visual and performing arts abilities. Elements to be addressed and also reported in evaluation efforts include:

1. Differentiated opportunities for learning commensurate with the particular abilities and talents of gifted and talented individuals
2. Alternative learning environments in which gifted and talented individuals can acquire skills and understanding at advanced ideological and creative levels commensurate with their potential
3. Elements that help develop sensitivity and responsibility toward others
4. Elements that help develop a commitment to constructive ethical standards
5. Elements that enable the gifted and talented to develop self-generating problem-solving abilities to expand each pupil's awareness of choices for satisfying contributions in his or her environment
6. Elements that help develop realistic, healthy self-concepts

Standards

Quality programming is evident when educators (1) specify goals; (2) write clear objectives; (3) establish high standards; (4) select children who can reasonably be expected to acquire advanced intellectual and creative skills and knowledge; (5) involve parents; (6) provide alternative learning environments; (7) provide instruction based on the unique learning needs of the gifted and talented; and (8) evaluate results. All of these items must be spelled out in a written plan and in an application that the California State Board of Education in California must approve before school districts receive GATE funding.

Successful coordinators of programs for the gifted and talented are accustomed to:

- Use a needs-based approach to program planning and pupil placement, incorporating elements specified in *Education Code Section 52200(c)*.
- Search for and identify underserved pupils from economically disadvantaged and from varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- Establish identification procedures that elicit evidence of excellence far beyond chronological peers and show which pupils require special services and programs.

Other requirements for quality programming include:

1. Unique opportunities for high-achieving and underachieving gifted and talented pupils
2. An academic component and, where appropriate, instruction in basic skills
3. Participation of:
 - a. Highly gifted pupils—those in the upper range of intellectual ability
 - b. Pupils from economically disadvantaged and varying cultural and linguistic backgrounds
4. Maintenance or improvement of the quality of existing programs
5. Experimentation (where possible) with different programmatic approaches and cost levels

6. Opportunities for all identified pupils to participate in programs in kindergarten and grades one through twelve

Prohibitions

State law contains certain prohibitions related to (1) the amount of time pupils spend in GATE programs; (2) educational trips; and (3) expenditure of supplemental state funds for GATE programs.

Time

Section 52206 of the *Education Code* prohibits districts from varying the 200-minute per week minimum requirement for pupil participation in GATE programs unless waivers have been granted by the State Board of Education. No waivers for this purpose were granted for 1983-84.

Trips

Most educators know the educational value of trips designed for specialized learning by children having an array of needs. Science centers, computer centers, oceanographic institutes, museums, business enterprises, industrial corporations, and visual and performing arts centers are just a few of the locations for off-campus learning. However, abuses in the past have caused legislators to prohibit the use of California GATE funds for this purpose (unless a waiver is obtained from the Superintendent of Public Instruction).

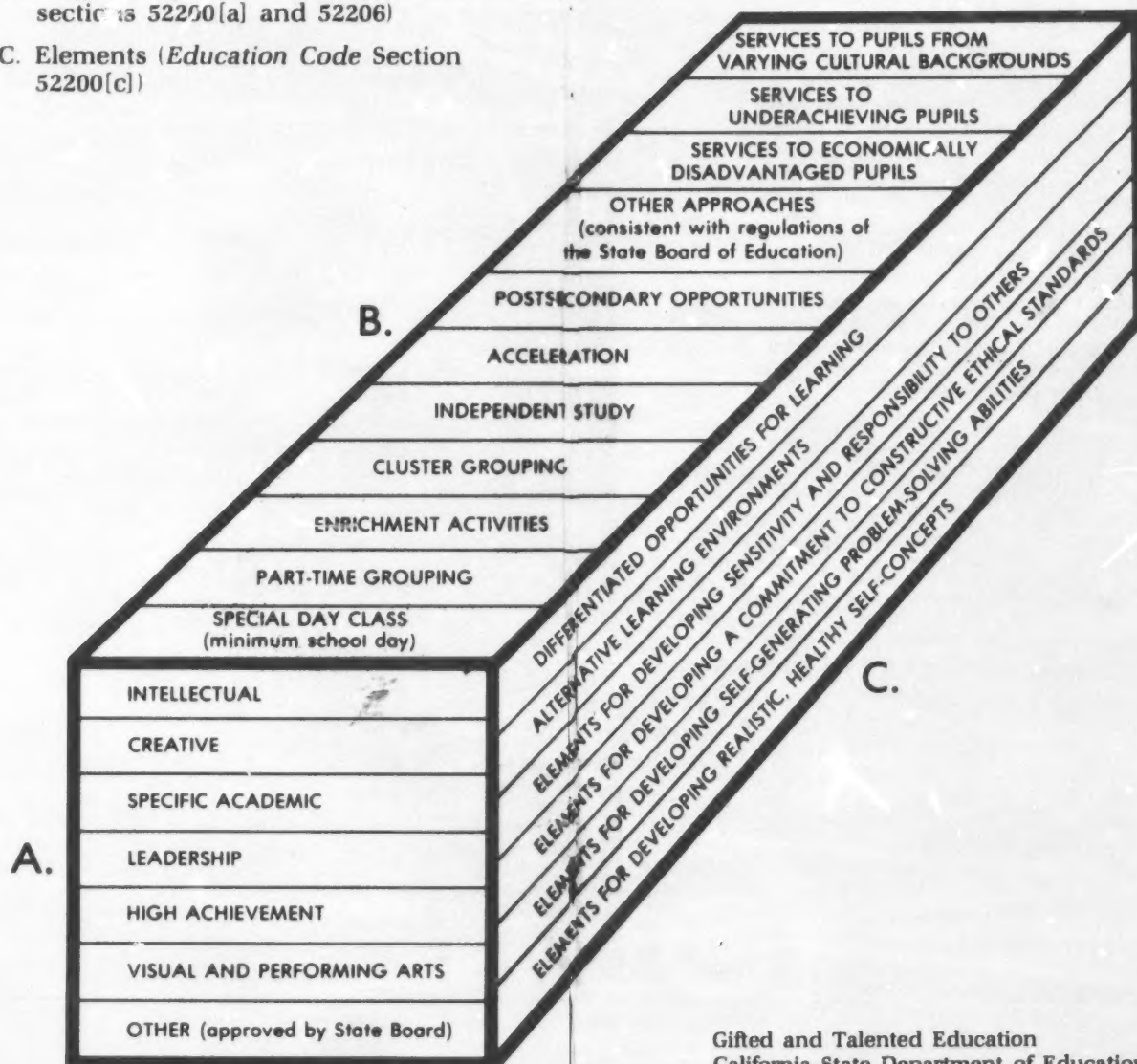
This prohibition has caused some school districts to rethink and redesign programs that in the past may have relied too heavily on outside stimulation to keep the gifted happy and quiet and, in some instances, tolerant of pedestrian learning. What the students really wanted to do was to explore new areas of thought, use their minds in ways they had never done before, invent, achieve, and feel comfortable about themselves and their far-ranging thoughts.

Thus, the prohibition may result in greater use of creative program-planning capabilities, needs-based teaching in the school, and fundamentally more sound curriculum-

Continued on page 8

Components of the GATE Program

- A. Identification Categories (*Education Code Section 52202*)
- B. Program Options (*Education Code sections 52200[a] and 52206*)
- C. Elements (*Education Code Section 52200[c]*)



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California State Department of Education

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learning options. It might also encourage creation of more responsive environments in classes and schools. (See the state guidelines for additional information on criteria for allowing transportation expenses and field trip waivers.¹)

Money

What is the right amount of money for expenses for differentiating learning for gifted and talented pupils? Data from a state three-year (1957—1960) study postulated a figure of \$250 per pupil.² However, the program has been funded at a much lower level (averaging about \$90 per pupil in 1983-84). Except for those districts serving 50 or fewer GATE pupils, districts receive GATE funding based on the total average daily attendance of the school district.

Identification

Pertinent data, carefully developed and organized, are needed as evidence of a pupil's capacity for excellence beyond that of his or her chronological peers. Districts are encouraged to use a variety of approaches in identifying gifted and talented children in the six categories as long as the quality of existing programs for individual pupils is not diminished. (Overemphasis on high achievement programs could diminish the quality of GATE programs.)

Identification procedures are described in school district written plans that are a part of state-approved applications for program approval and funding. These procedures must conform to principles established in the *California Administrative Code, Title 5, Education, Section 3820(a)–(f)*.

¹*Guidelines for Implementing Education Code Sections 52200—52214, Effective June 30, 1980* (Revised edition). Prepared by Gifted and Talented Education (GATE), Office of Special Projects, Consolidated Programs Division. Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1981.

²*Education Programs for Gifted Pupils*. A report to the California Legislature prepared pursuant to Section 2 of Chapter 2385, Statutes of 1957, by the California State Department of Education. Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1961.

Districts describe how they will (1) ensure equal opportunity for screening; (2) examine a pupil's range of capabilities; (3) identify those pupils whose extraordinary capabilities require special services and programs; (4) document pupil eligibility; (5) review eligibility of identified transfer pupils; (6) ensure participation of economically disadvantaged pupils; and (7) ensure participation of pupils from varying cultural backgrounds.

The range of data must be broad enough to reveal gifts and talents across cultural, economic, and linguistic groups. When needed, persons with particular cultural understanding and/or linguistic competencies should be available and should assist in the screening and identification of GATE pupils.

Innovative Programming

Educators have been given a green light—an opportunity to use their creativity in developing and implementing innovative (1) identification models (without diminishing the quality of existing programs); (2) curriculum and instructional procedures; (3) criteria for identifying and developing leadership and visual and performing arts potential; and (4) evaluation systems that give hard and convincing data for continued state funding of GATE programs.

Pupils may be identified in one or more of the identification categories. Programming based on identification data, available program options, and the incorporation of certain elements (see the chart on pages 6—7) must contain an academic component and, if needed, provide instruction in basic skills. The chart is intended to help the reader see multidimensional aspects and opportunities for developing programs for gifted and talented pupils.

Administration

Especially during a time of fiscal restraint, care should be taken not to jeopardize the approval and consequently the funding of GATE programs by appointing ill-prepared persons to direct program activities.

Education Code Section 52212 requires districts with GATE programs to designate a person with responsibility for:

- Program development and implementation
- Identification procedures
- Fiscal management
- Collection of auditable records for an independent evaluation

GATE coordinators are responsible for (1) preparing applications for approval of state programs by the State Department of Education and for state funding; (2) selecting teachers who have been trained and are skilled in providing instruction based on the unique learning needs of the gifted and talented; (3) involving parents in planning and evaluation; and (4) monitoring pupil participation.

The GATE coordinators may well become participants in a new statewide thrust for excellence in education that may include modifications of the total curricula. In addition, the new effort may help ensure that GATE pupils acquire advanced critical thinking and creative skills, extraordinary leadership skills, and exceptional performing arts skills. All of these are in addition to the acquisition of advanced academic achievement skills.

Decentralization of the administration of GATE programs may emphasize programming based on the specific needs of the children in each school attendance area. However, little will be accomplished if site administrators lack experience and expertise.

Allowable Costs

Expenditures of state funds for GATE programs should comply with the principles and regulations governing the use of such funds and with the criteria that appear in the *Guidelines for Implementing Education Code Sections 52200—52214*.

The *Guidelines* (page 5) identify allowable costs as those that:

- Are incurred solely to provide state-approved programs for gifted and talented pupils
- Are readily identifiable in the district's account records

- Would not have occurred if the state-approved program for gifted and talented pupils had not been initiated
- Are most promising in ensuring the development of the extraordinary capabilities of gifted and talented pupils

To a significant degree, expenditures should provide opportunities for learning based on the unique needs of gifted and talented children. The expenditures should be made for personnel, supplies, and equipment not usually provided to schools or classrooms. If children other than GATE pupils benefit from these expenditures, the state funds should be prorated. The supplies and equipment provided should be instructional in nature and should not be items normally used in an office. An exception to this restriction would be the purchase of computers, provided substantial cost savings are documented.

Transportation services may be a legitimate cost if provided to or from recognized educational institutions that offer regularly scheduled classes and programs. Field trips, on the other hand, are prohibited in all but a few exceptional instances and then only if approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

This brief description contains only a few examples of authorized expenditures. More detailed information is available in the *Guidelines*.

Evaluation

An evaluation of a program for the gifted and talented should show:

- Gains children have made through the GATE program
- Changes pioneered through the mentally gifted minor (MGM) and GATE programs that affect total educational programs
- Improved competencies of teachers
- Impact on community life and home environment
- Operational and administrative efficiency and effectiveness

Procedures should be selected or designed to show the degree of progress toward objectives that contain (1) measurable or observable expectancies; (2) reasonable but relevant

criteria; and (3) limiting or facilitating conditions. Evaluation efforts should lead to systematic improvement of GATE programs.

Pupil evaluation should be based on the needs that individual gifted and talented children have because they are gifted and talented. In addition, separate evaluation efforts might focus on class, school, program, and teacher expectancies. To be noted, certainly, is the legislative requirement of parent participation not only in planning but also in evaluating the effectiveness of GATE programs.

Evaluation should measure changes in the main components of programs (see the chart on pages 6—7). It should also show what has been accomplished because of the program. To get at this factor, one must determine what gifted and talented pupils would have accomplished if there had been no GATE Program. Evaluation should compare the present and past and contribute to improving the future.

Evaluation procedures are described in the written plan that is a part of the district's application for program approval and funding. The procedures assess pupil progress, identification, program options, curriculum, staff development, administration, cost effectiveness, parent involvement, and other appropriate aspects of the program.

Parental Support

Parents have made a difference in (1) political support and the survival of programs; (2) legislatively required involvement in program planning and evaluation; (3) the quality of identification, instruction, curriculum construction, and program development; and (4) the lives of children.

In the process some parents have acquired new insight into their own intellectual and creative capabilities and have found ways of becoming more effective human beings.

Parents have developed a statewide advisory council that is a part of the California State Association for the Gifted. Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of regional representatives are available from the GATE unit, State Department of Education.

Questions About the State Program for Gifted and Talented Pupils

1. What is the GATE Program? It is a state-funded categorical aid program that provides gifted and talented children with appropriate learning opportunities based on their unique needs and extraordinary potential.
2. Who benefits from the GATE Program?
 - a. Approximately 200,000 public school children in kindergarten and grades one through twelve
 - b. Teachers who acquire teaching strategies to develop intelligence, creativity, academic ability, high achievement, extraordinary leadership, and visual and performing arts ability
 - c. School district personnel responsible for upgrading expectancies and accomplishments of the total educational program
 - d. The State of California
3. How are GATE participants selected?
 - a. By a committee that looks at all available evidence of extraordinary potential in the six identification categories (see page 6)
 - b. By multiple criteria
4. What constitutes an appropriate program for GATE participants?
 - a. A locally designed program with identification, program development, teacher selection, staff development, funding, and evaluation procedures that contribute significantly to meeting the differentiated learning needs of gifted and talented public school pupils in kindergarten and grades one through twelve
 - b. A program that meets standards established in *Education Code* sections 52200—52214; in the *California Admin-*

istrative Code, Title 5, Education, sections 3800—3870; and in the Guidelines for Implementing Education Code Sections 52200—52214.

5. How do we know whether a program has been successful? We know from the results of:
 - a. Questioning of the participants
 - b. Comparison of the accomplishments of participating and nonparticipating pupils
 - c. State Department of Education on-site reviews and the use of a self-assessment process
 - d. Evaluation efforts conducted by parents
6. What special characteristics are needed by GATE teachers?
 - a. Commitment to full development of human beings
 - b. Genuine love of learning
 - c. Humor and the ability to relate
 - d. Resourcefulness
 - e. Energizing, mobilizing, and transformation capabilities
 - f. Knowledge about and skill in meeting unique and advanced needs of gifted and talented students
 - g. Demonstrated advanced competence in one or more of the identification categories
 - h. Ability to apply taxonomies of knowledge, skills, and objectives; research findings; and new ideas
7. How are GATE programs funded?
 - a. State—\$18.5 million for 1984-85, based on several funding formulas
 - b. Local—varies but is often a key factor in program quality and acceptance
 - c. Private sources (e.g., business gifts of executive and other employee time, computers, and other equipment)
 - d. Federal—Chapter 1 block grant funds
8. What can parents do to aid GATE pupils, teachers, and programs?
 - a. Learn how to help preschool gifted and talented children to discriminate

visual, auditory, and tactile stimuli and to solve simple problems.

- b. Help school district personnel plan and evaluate GATE programs.
- c. Provide services to teachers, administrators, gifted and talented pupils, schools, and school districts.
- d. Become more capable, creative problem solvers; critical thinkers; inventors; and change agents.

9. Do all school districts have GATE programs?

No. GATE is a permissive rather than a mandated program for 441 of the 1,034 school districts of California. The 441 districts do, however, have more than 80 percent of the public school population of California. *Education Code* sections 52204 and 52211 have the effect of prohibiting the expansion of the GATE program beyond the state-wide a.d.a. base established in 1979-80.

10. Who administers the program?

- a. The superintendent of schools of a school district or county does so; or, as in most instances, a designee, usually a consultant or coordinator, administers the program.
- b. *Education Code* Section 52212 requires that the program coordinator be responsible for:
 - (1) Program development and implementation
 - (2) Identification procedures
 - (3) Fiscal management
 - (4) Collection of auditable records for the independent evaluation of the GATE program

11. What does the State Department of Education do to help districts and counties in planning, implementing, and evaluating programs?

- a. Develops and disseminates guidelines
- b. Provides in-service education for teachers and administrators
- c. Assists school district personnel in planning fully defensible GATE programs

- d. Facilitates legislatively defined roles of parents in program planning and evaluation
 - e. Conducts on-site program assistance reviews
 - f. Encourages the production of innovative means of identifying gifted and talented children and for conducting uniquely appropriate programs for them
 - g. Responds to requests for information from legislators, parents, and other persons
12. Is the GATE program about to terminate?
- a. Efforts on the part of parents and others have helped legislators see the importance of the GATE program and of the inadvisability of terminating it.
 - b. Independent evaluation data to date indicate that GATE classes "typify the best of what the educational system can be and the best of what bright, young, creative minds can produce."³ The GATE experience in developing creativity, critical thinking, and higher intellectual skills is needed as a basis for improvement of curriculum and instruction and for transforming public education.
 - c. The program has a sunset date of 1987. However, that does not mean that the program will be terminated.
13. Where does one go to get additional information about the GATE Program?
- a. GATE Team, California State Department of Education, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814
 - b. Persons listed in the *Directory of Gifted and Talented Education in California*
 - c. Program coordinators in neighboring school districts
 - d. California Association for the Gifted
 - e. Regional associations of GATE coordinators and parents

³Second Annual Report of the Evaluation of the Gifted and Talented Education Program. RMC Report UR-494. Prepared by Christine T. Wood and David Fetterman. Mt. View, Calif.: RMC Corporation, 1982, p. 113.

Additional Information

This brochure presents highlights and key features of the California Gifted and Talented Education Program. As such, it is a general description and guide. For more detailed information the reader is directed to:

Guidelines for Implementing Education Code Sections 52200—52214, Effective June, 1980

(Sacramento: California State Department of Education); *Education Code* sections 52200—52214; *California Administrative Code, Title 5, Education*, sections 3800—38870; memoranda of the GATE unit, California State Department of Education; and directors of district and county programs for gifted and talented pupils.

Filmstrips

Sound filmstrips on gifted and talented education issued by the California State Department of Education are listed as follows:

More Than One Way to Skin an Apple, 10 min.

Presents creative problem solving in everyday classroom activities.

Parents Can Make a Difference. Offers information on the role of parents in gifted and talented education.

Putting It All Together. Discusses the use of classroom materials and concepts based on J. P. Guilford's structure of intellect model.

The filmstrips are available for loan from offices of county superintendents of schools, from school districts with more than 150 gifted and talented pupils, and from Media Services, California State Department of Education, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814.

Publications

Publications on gifted and talented education issued by the California State Department of Education are listed as follows:

<i>Title and date of publication</i>	<i>Price</i>
<i>Arts for the Gifted and Talented, Grades 1—6 (1981)</i>	\$2.75
<i>Curriculum Guide for Teaching Gifted Children Science, Grades 1—3 (1977)</i>	1.00
<i>Curriculum Guide for Teaching Gifted Children Science, Grades 4—6 (1977)</i>	1.00
<i>Curriculum Guide for Teaching Gifted Children Social Sciences, Grades 1—3 (1977)</i>	1.00
<i>Curriculum Guide for Teaching Gifted Children Social Sciences, Grades 4—6 (1977)</i>	1.00
<i>Education of Gifted and Talented Pupils (1979)</i>	2.50
<i>Literature and Story Writing: A Guide for Teaching Gifted and Talented Children in the Ele- mentary and Middle Schools (1981)</i>	2.75
<i>Teaching Gifted Children Literature, Grades 4—6 (1978)</i>	1.00
<i>Teaching Gifted Students Literature, Grades 7—9 (1978)</i>	1.00
<i>Teaching Gifted Students Literature and Languages, Grades 9—12 (1978)</i>	1.00
<i>Teaching Gifted Children Music, Grades 1—6 (1978)</i>	1.00
<i>Teaching Gifted Students Social Sciences, Grades 7—9 (1977)</i>	1.00

Orders should be directed to:

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